United Nations A/HRC/31/NGO/93

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 February 2016

English only

Human Rights Council
Thirty-first session
Agenda item 3
Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Written statement* submitted by the Imam Ali's Popular Students Relief Society, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[15 February 2016]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

GE.16-02495(E)

Please recycle

Social responsibilities of transnational corporations on respecting human rights of children

One of the key factors on social and cultural issues in societies is the main economic pathway which is active inside countries, in that these pathways lead popular mass movements. The stronger the existing economic factors, the more ability they have to impact on social currents. In every state, except the government which has tremendous access to economic and financial resources, powerful corporations active in national and international economy are considered among the most influential powers.

In recent decades, we have seen a remarkable enhancement in the number of transnational corporations worldwide. Today, because of accessibility to incessant financial, human and technological resources, giant multinational companies have become one of the undisputed powers affecting the social, political and economic structures of different countries. There is evidence on the claim released on the mass media. For instance, giant companies have become large landowners in different countries and a huge number of low-income workers have been recruited in developing states. In some cases, we see that the net annual income of mentioned corporations has been exceeded the GDP of some under developed or developing states. Or, the owners of some multinational companies are considered among the richest people in the world. Moreover, there is evidence on intervention of giant multinational companies in the determination or changing the sovereignty of some under developed or developing states, in direct or vicarious ways. To illustration, it can be referred to released documents by some experts on the interferences of such companies in political crisis in some of the South American States. It led to orientation and suppression of popular currents seeking freedom by creating humanitarian catastrophes.

When the human rights violations come into the life of innocent children, it cannot be tolerated by any one. As a recent example, two international human rights defending agencies have accused some major IT international enterprises to lack of supervision on working conditions in cobalt mines in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. According to the reports, children under 12 are being recruited in the noted mines. The extracted cobalt is utilized by giant companies in the production of electronic devices. In another case, as we remind the released evidence on the news, a multi-billion dollar sportswear company admitted to recruiting children under 10 in some undeveloped countries making shoes, cloths and footballs.

It seems that the global capitalist system is navigating the world to go astray in which enterprises behave in such a manner that authorize themselves being fed by the wage of defenseless captive forced child labor in underground work place, directly or indirectly. Although, there are reports on human rights violations of transnational corporations on economic and political interests of some states; the most inhumane issues in the subject which must be immediately addressed is relevant child labor reports and the consequences of the problem on the life of the target group.
In addition, multinational corporations similar to the residents of the states have social responsibilities to revere human rights protecting vulnerable communities especially children. It should be emphasized the giant multinational companies as the well-known brands in the world, must not be engaged in any kind of process that violates the rights of children in any state in a direct or vicarious way. The giant multinational enterprises should give assurance to human rights defenders and the council to do their bests diminishing any form of child labor in their subsidiaries and partner companies especially in vulnerable developing states. Moreover, they should be called on by the council to respect their human rights responsibilities to take care and improve the human rights situation of children in all the states they have factories, subsidiaries, raw materials partner companies or even markets. Besides, noted corporations should do their attempt based on the global rules of the International Labor Organization respecting minimum income of labors, especially in developing countries that their subsidiaries located.

However, it is seen that some multinational corporations have established charities in some deprived vicinities of the world; it is more logic they are accountable about the human rights violations in their professional dominions of the enterprises, in advance. It is expected the managers and decision makers of such enterprises in respect to social responsibilities of their companies to alleviate the rate of child labor, provide opportunities for improvement the standards of living for the children of the poor labor families employed by their subsidiaries worldwide. It is the time

these giant companies represent their social humanitarian responsibilities through developing specified measurable mechanisms in their organizational structures.

The following items are recommended for the issue:

1- The "Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises" places heavy emphasis in their mandates and reports on the target group of children which have been afflicted or under the high-risk of affliction by human rights violations as a result of any kinds of action strengthens child labor especially by transnational corporations worldwide.

2- Any violations on children's rights as a result of transnational corporations' activities in different states should become under deep consideration of the council. In such cases, the violated corporation must be accountable to the international community, the council and the states in its territory.

3- The council calls on multinational corporations under a binding mechanism to collaborate with international and local NGOs to detect and alleviate children's rights violations, especially child labor. The most significant mandate of the collaboration should be elimination of child labor to the last layers of subsidiaries and partners in the business directly or indirectly - in a wide range from producing raw materials to supply. It is considerable that the fulfilment of such a collaboration, demands special incentives considered by the side of the beneficiary states. To implement the process as more efficient as possible, the function of the corporations concerning the issue should be supervised and verified by the NGOs.